Informant:	**LMP-S1**	**Spanish**
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Interviewer:	**Claudia Hernandez, M.O. Jones, Patrick Polk**	
Transcriber:	**?**	

S1: Yes, but many people visit him every day. He's from San Andres Ixtapa one hour from the capital of Guatemala. He's the only original one in the world.

Patrick: And San Andes?

S1: San Andres is on the way of Chimaltihuango. There are a lot of tourists in that part.

CH: Someone from Toronto, Canada came and left you that thing you have back there.

S1: Many people come and bring me things from different countries.

Patrick: Is that a towel?

S1: What does he say?

CH: (translates)

S1: Yes, because his feet are normal from this part. They put a towel because many people pour liquor on his body. That is so it won't get damaged. He has pants and they change his clothes every six months. He is very famous. If people ask him to do bad things, he'll make them come true. Outside there's a sign that says to not ask him to do bad things because they'll come true right away.

Patrick: So be careful what you wish for?

CH: Yes.

S1: So don't ask for bad things. But there is a lot of liquor. It's like when there's a fair. It's similar to the Broadway festival. Everyone who goes takes candles and liquor. On Tuesdays and Fridays it gets very crowded. They don't charge tourists for taking pictures but when they get on they do get charged.

CH: (translates)

S1: It's fifteen minutes away from Antigua. Many Americans live there. They are very rich. They have mansions and have made churches. There is a place where they like to go and it's located in a cemetery. Have you ever heard of a cemetery where ghosts throw dirt and water at you? They scare you and you hear voices. Windows open by themselves. You'll hear doors opening. Before it was a church and a cemetery. Now it's a restaurant and a hotel.

CH: I had a question about some candles over there in the front. They have phosphorous inside.

S1: That's so that someone will come back.

CH: So it's like a petition to bring someone back?
S1: People write a letter saying that they need their husbands; they need work, that their husband doesn't leave them. It's mostly for work. That the Americans won't treat them badly. Things like that. Many people bring pictures of their bosses and put them under San Simon's left foot.

Patrick: How come it's the left foot?

S1: Saint Simon's left leg is longer and that's the foot he uses to dominate. The rod he carries is respected. Mayors use them all over Central America. Anyone who carries a rod is respected. If someone takes it away, that person will go to prison for a long time. He's like a judge or like a president. That's the way that the law works.

CH: He's very respected that they honor him.

S1: He doesn't have that honor because he wants it, it's because he's a mayor who hears people's complaints and everything is dealt with.

Patrick: So, good things with the left and bad things with the right?

S1: If you talk in Saint Simon's right ear he will listen to you and help you and give you results right away.

Patrick: Is there a story why his left foot is longer?

S1: I haven't read anything about that but I do know that it's to dominate.

CH: Is there any specific reason why he hears things in the right ear?

S1: Because you are talking to him directly. He is very untouchable and very miraculous. But he says that if his father allows him everything goes well. His spirit comes down on some people, not one me but if you are a sacred person he will go into you. He talks to you. He is very old. He is about eighty or ninety years old. His voice is very slow and very quiet. No one can fool people because Saint Simon speaks dialect that is very low. He sounds like a very old man that is very tired. He gives remedies. But a woman does not speak, a man does. About twenty years ago, a church burned down because it was very poor. It was made out of straw. And nothing happened to Saint Simon. All the homes burned down because they were made out of straw.

CH: (Translates)

S1: He has these little defects because there is a lot of smoke over there in Guatemala. He says that he is the original one. His smoke color is normal like any other man.

PJ: Why do you associate smoke and cigars with Saint Simon?

S1: I don't associate it. What happens is that he works that way. He is like a witch doctor and that is what he uses. He was a man from Italy. But I don't know if I told you the story about him. He was a very light-skinned man and he had a lot of money. He then gave some of his money away and food. That man disappeared and never went back to his country. And it's him. He would heal people and would not charge them. But people say he was a white man.

Patrick: He was Italian?

S1: Yes, he was. It was his good will to visit a very poor village in Guatemala and give to the poor. Then the plane disappeared and people never found out what happened to it.

Patrick: When did this happen?

S1: When airplanes were invented, I think. A very old man was building a fire at about four in the morning when he saw the white man pass by. So the white man approaches the old man and asks him if he knew the time. The white man drank coffee and fell asleep. Then the sun came out and ever since then, Saint Simon exists. He is very famous all over the world. Here, Saint Simon commerce is within the millions. The only thing is that it isn't heard of. There are many rich companies and there are many rich Americans because of Saint Simon and they don't know him at all. The owner of Indio Corporation doesn't know Saint Simon. He doesn't even light a candle for Saint Simon and he is a millionaire. That man sells a lot with his store named after Saint Simon. Right now this saint is very miraculous in Guatemala. Whatever you ask him, he will grant it. If you go and see him but are thinking about something else, you can't look at him. People have tried to steal him and the whole church moves. It's like a mansion for priests. There are earthquakes and nothing ever happens to the church. The bells are made out of gold. Nothing ever falls. The 13th, 14th, and 15th of January, helicopters fly over, people walk with crosses, the sick come out, artists from Mexico, Italy and Russia, all go and pray for him. He is like God. Companies like El Indio came here and asked me for a picture. I let him borrow the picture but I didn't know what it was for. So now, the company is becoming rich by selling candles of the man of Esquipulas. It is very expensive. I didn't receive a cent. They are becoming millionaires. I'm thinking of filing a lawsuit against them.

Patrick: Why is he black?

S1: He just appeared in the mountains.

CH: Can you tell the story of how he appeared?

S1: I don't know it very well but they say that in the border of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. And near a street called Santa Monica, there is a tiny little village named Esquipulitas. There was a river that would pass through hills and behind it there was a cemetery. All this was near a cattle-farm and people say they saw a very old man. Day by day the man would appear covered with palms. He would appear on a hammock and people would pass by and take him water or "atole" because he was very thin. He would say, "No, I don't eat. Give it to the poor, hungry children." They say that at seven in the morning he was always sitting there. So then people got the idea to follow him. They

followed him to a mountain and he would suddenly fall and disappear into a cave. That cave is now called the cave of miracles. There are three caves and they are very large. Could you excuse me?

CH: We wanted to ask you about the plants you have in your house. For example, what plants do you have?

S1: I have spearmint, which is good for stomachaches and for constipation.

CH: When you cut the spearmint, do you use the whole plant or do you use only part of it?

S1: I only use part of it.
CH: Which part do you use?

S1: I use the leaves.

CH: Do you use it fresh or dry?

S1: Both fresh and dry. It's the same thing.

CH: Do you store it in water or in oils?

S1: No.

CH: You only use it for stomachaches?

S1: Yes. I also give it to children when they have indigestion.

CH: Do you have an idea why spearmint works so well for those things?

S1: No.

CH: What other plant do you use?

S1: Florifund. It is used to cure headaches, for when people have cancer and it is used as an ointment, and it's used for arthritis, and for muscular pains.

CH: What part of the florifund do you use?

S1: The flower.

CH: Is the flower always used?

S1: Yes, only the flower.

CH: Do you use it fresh or dry?

S1: I don't let it dry. When it starts getting soggy, I just put it in florida water.

CH: How do you use it? In tea?

S1: Oh no. Not in tea. People go crazy if they drink it in tea. It is too strong. People go dumb. It is only used in baths. The leaves aren't boiled either; you only put them in alcohol or in florida water.

CH: Is this before they get soggy?

S1: It gets soggy but then you just put it away.

CH: And do you have an idea why this plant works so well? What properties does it have?

S1: It has opium. It makes people fall asleep. If any one of you has trouble sleeping, I make a cross with three flowers and you fall asleep right away. You don't want to wake up.

CH: These are the bells you're talking about?

S1: Yes, there are yellow, pink, and white. The white one is stronger.

CH: What other plants do you have?

S1: I have rosemary, which is used to strengthen a fallen womb, and also for when a person has bronchitis. It's also used for good luck.

CH: What part of the rosemary is used?

S1: The little stems are used and when women are pregnant, this helps their womb. They bathe in it.

CH: Is it used fresh?

S1: Yes, you boil it and it's used for baths.

CH: But when you cut it, do you use it fresh?

S1: You just cut it and boil it right away.

CH: Is there a special way you store it?

S1: No, I just save it in a bag.

CH: And do you have an idea why rosemary is used to heal?

S1: These are things that have existed for a long time and I know that they are good. I also have "altamisa," which is called Saint Mary in Mexico. That is very good for

stomachaches, for good luck, and to get rid of bad spirits. You drink it, and you bathe in it, and you spread it around.

CH: And what part of that plant do you use?

S1: I use all of it.

CH: You use the stems, the leaves, and the flower?

S1: Yes, everything.

CH: Can you use it fresh and dry?

S1: Yes, fresh and green.

CH: Is there a preference in using fresh or dry plants?

S1: No, it's the same.

CH: Do you have an idea why these plants work so well?

S1: These plants come from the natives that come from the mountains. From there they have been used for medicinal purposes.

CH: What other plants do you have?

S1: I have rue. It is used for abortion, to have good luck, and to get rid of air, or it is placed on the stomach to also get rid of air. It is used for many things.

CH: What part of the plant do you use?

S1: The leaves. The roots are used for a different purpose. The roots of rue, avocado, orange, and lime are used for an abortion. This isn't used here, but in Central America.

CH: Are the roots used fresh and green?

S1: Yes, the root is green.

CH: What about the plant?

S1: It's also green.

CH: But it can also be used dry?

S1: Yes.

CH: And how do you store it?

S1: I don't store it. I cut it from home.

CH: What other plants do you have?

S1: Peaches are used for ringworm. You use the seed and boil it. The children then drink the tea and it kills the worms. I also have apasote. It is used for all kinds of ringworm.

CH: So when you need all these plants, you just go to your garden and cut what you need?

S1: Apasote is used so that drunks will stop drinking. You blend it with garlic and it kills the worm.

CH: Is it the worm that causes them to drink?

S1: Yes. I also have myrtle. It is a tiny little flower used for when a woman does not get her period. Or when it's not a normal cycle.

CH: And do you save all these plants?

S1: No, I just get them from my garden when I need them. If they die, I just plant new ones.
CH: And what other ones do you have?

S1: I just have these. In other houses people have "chatia," which is used after a woman has a baby. This plant cures pain and hemorrhaging after she gives birth. The little flower is boiled and when it's boiled, it falls apart. Then the woman drinks the water.

CH: The flower is used, but are the leaves used also?

S1: No, just the flower.

CH: Do you prefer using it fresh or dry?

S1: That is just instantaneous.

CH: Do you have any other plants that you use?

S1: I can't remember right now.

Patrick: So maybe we can go to your house some day.

CH: Do you have an altar for Saint Simon?

S1: No, I just have a small place. I also have avocados.

CH: But you use that for abortions right?

S1: Yes, but I also use the leaves. It is also used for ringworm. I use the ends of the tree.

Patrick: And the corn?

S1: It's only to eat. I like to have a green atmosphere.

CH: Does the corn serve any medicinal purposes?

S1: Only the hairs are used for when it is painful for a person to urinate. Then I boil the hairs in water and the person drinks the water. And from the leaves of the corn I make dough. I add salt and lard. Then I make tamales and I eat them with hot sauce. I like to plant everything. My sons say that it's like a jungle. I also have "yerbamorra" and we use them in egg soups. It is good because it has a lot of vitamins and iron.

CH: You say it is recommended for children?

S1: We eat that all the time. We add salsa and tomatoes.

Patrick: Do you have chili peppers in your house?

S1: I've never had chili peppers. I have garlic.

CH: And what do you use the garlic for?

S1: This kind is only used for witchcraft, for good luck, protection.

CH: Do you use it dry or green?

S1: I use it dry. But it's not like regular garlic. This kind is more like an onion. It's very small. Garlic is good for when a person has high blood pressure or for gas problems.

CH: Do you save it sometimes when you cut it?

S1: No, I just plant them.

CH: When you use the garlic, do you use the leaves?

S1: No, just the garlic itself.

CH: Is there a certain ritual you perform when cutting a plant?

S1: Only rue and rosemary. I caress it because then it will dry. If there are many fights in the home, it will dry.

CH: When you cut the plant, do you have to ask for its permission?

S1: Yes, I say, "I'm going to cut you because I want you to have more children."

CH: Is that all you have to say?

S1: Yes.

CH: Do you also have aloe?

S1: Yes.

CH: Do you also have to ask for permission to cut it?

S1: No, I just cut the aloe. They say it's bad when aloe blooms but mine blooms and nothing happens.

CH: Why do people say it's bad?

S1: People just say this, but there is small aloe and there is a thick kind. The thick one is to get rid of kidney stones. You blend a pineapple w/ aloe and olive oil. The person drinks this for nine days and the rocks go away. I don't treat the plants badly; I just take the leaves and don't cut the whole thing.

CH: Is there a certain time of the day when you cut the aloe?

S1: Yes, I always cut it at twelve in the morning because if I cut it at twelve in the afternoon, it will die. You also need to have a good hand to plant because all the things I've planted have grown. If you have a hot hand, the plant will die.

CH: Do you have to plant them during a certain season?

S1: It can be during any time you want. It just has to be a fresh place. When it's hot, you don't have to water the plant.

CH: So, in the morning or at night?

S1: In the morning or at night.

Patrick: What about when it's cold?

S1: You also water them, but just a little bit. Aloe doesn't need water, but in my house I add water.

Patrick: Are plants just to guard the house?

CH: (translates)

S1: I like them to have luck and also because they look nice.

Patrick: What plants?

S1: Aloe is used for good luck. They hang it with red yarn in front of the home. Rue, spearmint, and rosemary are all for good luck.

CH: Do you have albaca?

S1: No, it can't grow here.

Patrick: They're sacred plants?

S1: Yes.

CH: Do you also have to ask permission to cut rue?

S1: Yes, but you cannot cut it any time and not anyone can cut it.

CH: What time do you cut it then?

S1: Very early in the morning.

CH: And what about at night?

S1: If people envy you, it dries up. Many of mine have dried up. I also have "bogambilia" you know the kind that grows around. When people have a cough, you add a bit of sugar, cinammon, and you boil it with milk. People then drink it and their cough goes away. It has to be the red kind. It tastes very good.

Patrick: I have a lot of that at home.

S1: It's very good because sometimes people go to the doctor and they get an injection but it doesn't work. And they give you a lot of medicine that doesn't cure.

CH: Why does it have to be the red one?

S1: It's just very good for that. I have quequesque leaves for when a person has a fever. Here they use it for luxury. But over there they cut them, put lard, and put it all over the person's body.

CH: Do you have a lot of it?

S1: Yes, only one plant. It died and then I planted it again. Now there are two leaves that have grown.

CH: And do you have to use the quequesque plant green?

S1: Yes, always green. Another thing you can do when a person has a fever you get a bucket and add a bottle of alcohol, pig lard, and ten lemons. Then the person wraps in a towel. Then they bathe in the mixture. If their temperature is 120 degrees, the blood starts thickening. About fifteen days ago they brought a little girl who was in serious condition. They came here since I know them and I told him to bring me lard, lemon,

and alcohol. I prayed and in one minute she was better. Here there are many cases of fever.

CH: Are there many cases when doctors diagnose the wrong illness?

S1: Yes, there are many cases. Here, an infection can be treated right away. There is a lady who had her tongue removed. She went to the dentist and had all her teeth removed. Then, she got an infection on her tongue and that is why it was removed. I would never allow anyone's tongue to be removed. They make a small problem very serious. Instead of curing it, they make it worse. People with sores come to see me and the doctors make them worse. They scrape it and it gets worse. Then they remove a bone from here and from there. They take a piece from your butt to put it somewhere else and it doesn't fit. Since they have a license, it doesn't matter if they die. If I was in a doctor's place, I could cure more than a regular doctor. I can cure a wound without using stitches and they can't. I can make a stain or a bruise go away. A Russian man came to visit me and he has been cured here. He doesn't speak Spanish. He is about thirty years old. He has an infection that they would say was skin cancer. He had it on his back. It is very red. He was very scared because he is kind of old and has a lot of money. I got angry with him because he didn't trust me. I told him to come here because I wanted to see what his problem was. He likes to sun bathe a lot and I told him that he shouldn't do that.

CH: (translates)

S1: Apasote is also very good for ingrown sores. So then you cook the apasote and mash it. Then you apply it to the wound.

CH: Is apasote easy to grow in your house?

S1: Yes it is. We eat it with eggs.

CH: There are two types of apasote. The one you eat and the one for stomach aches.

S1: Yeah the other one doesn't taste good.